

CLAIMS

1. An information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

first preparation means for preparing first usage control status which identifies first usage details describing purchased rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first usage details;

storage means for storing said encrypted information, said first usage control status, a usage control policy that contains a second use type that describes the rights that can be purchased again based on the details of said purchased rights, price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

second preparation means for preparing second usage control status that identifies said second usage details and said pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags, when rights are purchased again through said other information processing apparatuses; and

sending means for sending said second usage control status prepared by said second preparation means as well as said encrypted information and said key stored on said storage means to said other information processing apparatuses.

2. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising first execution means for executing a process to utilize said information, based on said second usage control status prepared by said second preparation means.

3. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising:

third preparation means for preparing accounting information that corresponds to said first usage control status and second usage control status; and

second execution means for executing an account settlement process to settle the amounts posted based on said accounting information prepared by said third preparation means.

4. An information processing method for an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

a first preparation step of preparing first usage control status which identifies first usage details describing purchased rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first usage details;

a storage step of storing said encrypted information, said first usage control status, a usage control policy that contains a second use type that describes the rights that can be purchased again based on said purchased rights, price tags that contain the pricing details

corresponding to said second usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

a second preparation step of preparing second usage control status that identifies said second usage details and said pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags, when rights are purchased again through said other information processing apparatuses; and

a sending step of sending said second usage control status prepared by said second preparation step as well as said encrypted information and said key stored by said storage step to said other information processing apparatuses.

5. A providing medium, which provides a computer-readable program for executing a process to an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized in that the process comprises:

a first preparation step of preparing first usage control status which identifies first usage details describing purchased rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first usage details;

a storage step of storing said encrypted information, said first usage control status, a usage control policy that contains a second use type that describes the rights that can be purchased again based on the details of said purchased rights, price tags that contain the

pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

a second preparation step of preparing second usage control status that identifies said second usage details and said pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags, when rights are purchased again through said other information processing apparatuses; and

a sending step of sending said second usage control status prepared by said second preparation step as well as said encrypted information and said key stored by said storage step to said other information processing apparatuses.

6. An information processing apparatus, which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

receiving means for receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies said usage details describing said rights as well as the pricing details corresponding to said usage details; and

execution means for executing the processes needed to use said information based on said rights described by said usage details identified by said usage control status.

7. An information processing method for an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

a receiving step of receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies said usage details describing said rights as well as the pricing details corresponding to said usage details; and

an execution step of executing the processes needed to use said information based on said rights described by said usage details identified by said usage control status.

8. A providing medium, which provides a computer-readable program for executing a process to an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized in that the process comprises:

a receiving step of receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies said usage details describing said rights as well as the pricing details corresponding to said usage details; and

an execution step of executing the processes needed to use said information based on said rights described by said usage details identified by said usage control status.

9. An information processing apparatus, which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

storage means for storing said encrypted information, a usage control policy that contains the usage details that describe purchasable rights, price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

preparation means for preparing usage control status which identifies said usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored on said storage means; and

sending means for sending said usage control status prepared by said preparation means as well as said encrypted information and said key stored on said storage means to said other information processing apparatuses when the rights are purchased again by said other information processing apparatuses.

10. An information processing method for an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing

apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

a storage step of storing said encrypted information, a usage control policy that contains the usage details that describe purchasable rights, price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

a preparation step of preparing usage control status which identifies said usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored on said storage step; and

a sending step of sending said usage control status prepared by said preparation step as well as said encrypted information and said key stored on said storage step to said other information processing apparatuses when the rights are purchased again by said other information processing apparatuses.

11. A providing medium, which provides a computer-readable program for executing a process to an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized in that the process comprises:

a storage step of storing said encrypted information, a usage control policy that contains the usage details that describe purchasable rights, price tags that contain the pricing details

corresponding to said usage details, and the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information;

a preparation step of preparing usage control status which identifies said usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored on said storage step; and

a sending step of sending said usage control status prepared by said preparation step as well as said encrypted information and said key stored on said storage step to said other information processing apparatuses when the rights are purchased again by said other information processing apparatuses.

12. An information processing apparatus, which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

receiving means for receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies the first use type describing predetermined rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first use type;

storage means for storing a usage control policy that contains the second usage details that describe the rights that can be purchased again based on said rights described by said first usage details identified by said usage control status received by said receiving means,

and price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details; and

first preparation means for preparing second usage control status which identifies said second usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored by said storage means.

13. The information processing apparatus according to claim 12, characterized by further comprising:

second preparation means for preparing accounting information that corresponds to said second usage control status prepared by said first preparation means; and

execution means for executing an account settlement process to settle the amounts posted based on said accounting information prepared by said second preparation means.

14. An information processing method for an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized by comprising:

a receiving step of receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies the first use type describing predetermined rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first use type;

a storage step of storing a usage control policy that contains the second usage details that describe the rights that can be purchased again based on said rights described by said first usage details identified by said usage control status received by said receiving step, and price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details; and

a first preparation step of preparing second usage control status which identifies said second usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored by said storage step.

15. A providing medium, which provides a computer-readable program for executing a process to an information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which purchases rights to decrypt and use encrypted information, characterized in that the process comprises:

a receiving step of receiving, from said other information processing apparatuses, said encrypted information, the key needed to decrypt said encrypted information, and the usage control status which identifies the first use type describing predetermined rights and the pricing details corresponding to said first use type;

a storage step of storing a usage control policy that contains the second usage details that describe the rights that can be purchased again based on said rights described by said first usage details identified by said usage control status received by said receiving step,

and price tags that contain the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details; and

a first preparation step of preparing second usage control status which identifies said second usage details and the pricing details corresponding to said second usage details, based on said usage control policy and said price tags stored by said storage step.